

Regional Offices



IDEM has increased its responsiveness and provided a greater presence in local communities by means of its three regional offices. Staff members in these offices provide IDEM resources directly to the companies, businesses and residents of the area with personal, one-to-one contact.



NORTHWEST REGION
The Northwest Regional Office (NWRO) located in Gary serves Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties. Some of the most serious environmental challenges occur in this region of the state. The office provides local access to permits, inspections, reports and general information on environmental activities of state, municipal and industrial facilities.

Remediation Projects

The NWRO has and continues to develop remediation projects for Lake Michigan tributaries - Grand Calumet River, Indiana Harbor Ship Canal and Nearshore Lake Michigan Area. Under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, NWRO staff supported the Remedial Action Plan. Regional Office staff also assisted with the Natural Resources Damages Assessment and continued developing one of the agency's first Total Maximum Daily Load projects.

Interagency Task Force for E. coli

The Lake Michigan Lakewide Management Plan takes a watershed approach to address Lake Michigan beach closings. The Interagency Task Force for E. coli, in conjunction with IDEM and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, investigated E. coli non-point source pollution throughout the summer of 2000. The task force continues to work closely with communities to evaluate specific marina sources. The group also continues to work with sanitary districts to investigate combined sewer overflow contributions.

Law Enforcement Training

NWRO staff trained hundreds of local law enforcement academy participants on how to identify and respond to environmental problems. It focused on solid waste, open dumping, emergency response and general environmental regulations. As a result, local governments, particularly Lake Station and Gary, joined state and federal agencies in addressing problematic open dumping sites. Several property owners responded to warning letters and cleaned up sites.



NORTHERN REGION
The Northern Regional Office (NRO) located in South Bend, serves 10 counties. The office continues to establish IDEM as a viable and visible entity in the communities it serves by giving its

residents, government officials, regulated community and planning districts more local and responsive environmental protection and service. The NRO offers coordinated and quicker compliance inspections and gives closer attention to the many concerns, complaints and requests received each day from residents.

New Services

The NRO is providing some new services, including emergency response and pollution prevention and technical assistance. Staff members have aggressively promoted IDEM's confidential technical assistance program by literally knocking on doors of the businesses and industries throughout the region. This effort has paid off. The governor has recognized several area industries' achievements with Governor's Awards for Excellence in Pollution Prevention. The NRO Emergency Response Section is responding with more immediacy to environmental emergencies in the area. This gives the region a quicker and more efficient line of defense.

Toxics Reduction Challenge

Governor Frank O'Bannon challenged the state to reduce toxic and volatile organic compound (VOCs) emissions into the air. One of the targeted VOCs, styrene, is predominantly emitted by the fiberglass reinforced plastics industry. The northern region of Indiana, with its large concentration of

recreational vehicle-related industries, is one of the areas in the country with the highest levels of such emissions. Because of their familiarity and expertise with styrene, NRO staff have led the development of a new styrene rule for the entire state that works to reduce emissions by 50 percent by the end of 2002.

Project Management

The NRO has been instrumental in bringing more responsive management to several local, state and federal projects in the area. Local staff members focused the agency's attention on the Conrail Superfund Site in Elkhart, a long-standing area of contamination in a highly residential neighborhood. The NRO brought together local residents, the U.S. EPA and IDEM to foster better communication and is continuing to work through very lengthy and complex matters.

The NRO heard the concerns of the Friends of Juday Creek and worked with it to find a mutually acceptable remedy at the Douglas Road Superfund Site in Mishawaka. The NRO helped develop a plan that will maintain the environmental integrity of the creek. IDEM and its NRO staff have also actively provided assistance with Mishawaka's Uniroyal demolition project. This initiative involves removing 56 abandoned buildings and redeveloping the brownfields site into a new, vibrant commercial property. Redevelopment and reuse of brownfields properties

benefits communities by rejuvenating underutilized industrial sites, increasing the tax base and reducing urban blight.



SOUTHWEST REGION
The Southwest Regional Office (SWRO), located in Evansville, serves 13 counties in the southwest corner of the state. The SWRO provides access to public files and strives to improve and expand service to all communities in the region.

Regional Staff

Eight SWRO inspectors conduct inspections at a wide array of facilities in the region. These facilities range from major air emission sources to municipal wastewater treatment facilities. The inspectors are also responsible for asbestos renovation/demolition notifications, solid waste landfills, confined feeding operations and drinking water inspections. They help ensure compliance with state and federal environmental regulations within the region. The emergency responder in the SWRO has provided a more immediate response to environmental emergencies in the region. This emergency responder's presence and service is vital to the health and safety of the residents of the state and serves to minimize disastrous impacts on the air, land and water. More immediate response capa-

bility is particularly important along the Ohio and Wabash rivers where disasters can have far reaching impacts.

Education and Outreach

The SWRO has reached out to business and community leaders through educational forums. During these forums, SWRO staff members provided overviews of their duties and distributed copies of pertinent rules or guidance documents. Face-to-face, interactive sessions with time for questions and answers makes the topics more understandable. Forums have been provided to mayors, solid waste management district directors, health department inspectors and wastewater treatment operators.

The SWRO staff assists with activities ranging from completion of applications for new businesses to locating and tracking grant and loan funds. The pollution prevention representative has spearheaded an effort to pool funding from regional solid waste management districts to fund a television commercial campaign on open dumping.

IDEM Service Areas



- Northwest Regional Office
- Northern Regional Office
- Southwest Regional Office
- Indianapolis offices